

The Week:

As I woke up Friday morning to the beat of drums from our Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band, I realized the beginning of the semester is getting very close. Excitement continues to build as we are a week away from Move-in Day, Freshman Convocation and the start of classes!

Fall projections continue to indicate that we will see an enrollment increase as we strive to reach the 10,000 students milestone. I am encouraged that at this point our Freshmen Fall-to-Fall retention rate is 71.01% (as compared to 66.90% last year). This improvement is indicative of the engagement efforts of so many of you.

These next two weeks are so important as students will be returning to campus and working through challenges (financial and otherwise) to continue their educational pursuits. I want to thank so many of you as we work through our operational support strategies. Your empathy and support dramatically improve our students' opportunities for success.

The University has several events planned to welcome students back to campus, <http://news.nsula.edu/home/demon-days-2017-starts-aug-19/>. If you have the opportunity, I encourage you to join faculty, staff and community volunteers to assist our students moving into campus residence halls this Saturday. For more information, contact Reatha Cox at coxr@nsula.edu.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Faculty Institute and Faculty-staff luncheon tomorrow!

My Week:

Monday morning, I began the day with my monthly radio show with Tedd Dumas of Baldrige-Dumas Communications. Afterwards, the leadership team gathered for our monthly meeting (minutes are attached).

Later in the morning, Dr. Gentry, Dr. Nat Briscoe and I had a nice visit with a prospective new faculty member. Then I joined CLTCC Chancellor Jimmy Sawtelle and CLTCC Natchitoches Dean Laurie Morrow to welcome the inaugural cohort of students to the Advanced Manufacturing Technician program.

Sandwiched between several afternoon meetings with students and visitors to the office, we hosted a Welcome Back reception for the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts faculty. Under the leadership of Executive Director Dr. Steve Horton and an exceptional faculty, the LSMSA continues to be one of the nation's premier residential high schools. I am proud to say that we will welcome nine of their 104 May '17 graduates as incoming freshmen to NSU.

I ended the day with a meeting with FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students) leader Abby Haarmann as she briefed me on her summer work with students and plans for the fall semester.

Tuesday morning, I began the day with a planning meeting with the Vice Presidents and then a Tabletop training session involving key personnel from NSU, LSMSA and Natchitoches Fire Department. This informative exercise presented a simulated disaster, and we reviewed our Emergency Preparedness procedures.

Later that morning, Dr. Marcus Jones, Carl Jones and I met with Campus Living Villages United States Chief Executive Officer Gary Clarke as we finalized our Varnado Hall Residential College upgrades. That afternoon, I met with a prospective student-athlete and then had an economic development meeting with Mayor Posey and some business leaders.

Afterwards, Dr. Marcus Jones, Carl Jones and I participated in a University of Louisiana System conference call. Then I had the honor of attending a ceremony to announce the establishment of the Reynold H. Todtenbier Memorial Scholarship.

Following the ceremony, Dr. Vickie Gentry, Roni Biscoe, Frank Hall and I met about the 2016-2017 assessment cycle and plans to ensure strategic follow-up on the recommendations presented in the plan.

Wednesday morning, Daphne Sampite, Dawn Eubanks and I met to review implementation processes of cross enrollment agreements. Afterwards, I drove to Winnfield to speak to the Winnfield Rotary Club. An enthusiastic group that included the mayor, NSU alumni, educators, incoming NSU students and several prospective students and families greeted me at the meeting.

I returned to campus and joined Frances Conine, Jennifer Kelly, Van Erikson and Dr. Haley Titiano for a year-end review presentation by our Barnes & Noble Bookstore staff. Late Wednesday afternoon, I attended a Natchitoches Regional Medical Center Foundation meeting and dinner where the foundation announced 13 NRMCM Foundation scholarship recipients.

Thursday morning, I had a development meeting with Jill Bankston. We reviewed and updated our alumni outreach list and planned several fall visits and events.

The rest of the day included several meetings with university personnel, students and a short video recording with our marketing team. In addition, at the invitation of Academic Advising Executive Director Steve Hicks, I spent a few minutes with the University Studies 1000 instructors as they prepped for the fall semester.

Friday morning, National Center for Preservation Technology & Training administrators Kirk Cordell and Andy Ferrell, Superintendent of Cane River Creole National Historical Park Carrie Mardorf and Tommy Whitehead stopped by to update me on the NCPTT and NPS.

At lunch, I addressed a great group of student Resident Assistants (RA's) and Housing staff as they complete their final preparations for Move-in Day and the fall semester.

Friday afternoon, Jennifer and I joined several from campus for an "unofficial celebration" of the completion of our SACSCOC report.

I spent Saturday morning at our football team's first extended scrimmage of preseason camp and then made my way out to our Volleyball team's annual Fall Dig Fest tournament and fundraiser. From early indications, it looks to be a great year for our fall sports teams.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions, comments or suggestions.

Fork 'em Demons,

Chris



Dr. Chris Maggio
President
maggioc@nsula.edu

Northwestern State University
Office: 318-357-6441
223 Caspari Hall
Natchitoches, LA 71497
www.nsula.edu

